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PP RUEHDE RUEHROV RUEHTRO
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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7581
INFO RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA PRIORITY
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 002586

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DEPT FOR AF/E

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/13/2018
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [SO](#) [ET](#)
SUBJECT: SOMALIA: TFG PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER CONTINUE
STAND-OFF OVER INTERIM CABINET

REF: NAIROBI 2554

Classified By: Ambassador Michael Ranneberger. Reasons: 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Transitional Federal Government (TFG) Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein "Nur Adde" told Ambassador November 11 that President Yusuf had come under pressure and appeared to be showing increased flexibility in their discussions on the composition of an interim cabinet (reftel), but at a November 12 Nairobi press conference, Nur Adde's public announcement that he would present his proposed cabinet to Yusuf later the same day, and that he expected Yusuf to accept his proposal in order to meet a deadline established by IGAD in its October 29 communique, appeared to harden Yusuf's resolve not to cooperate. The semi-public tug-of-war over a cabinet scheduled to be in office only until a unity government cabinet could be created, served to highlight the continuing bad relationship between the President and the Prime Minister, and followed on the heels of the Prime Minister's failed efforts, in two London meetings November 6 - 7, to win Yusuf's agreement to the same interim cabinet.

¶2. (C) Nur Adde agreed with the Ambassador that the Joint Security and High Level Committees had to operate from Somalia if they were to have legitimacy with the Somali people. Yusuf and Nur Adde are traveling to Addis Ababa November 12 - 13 for meetings with the Government of Ethiopia, and perhaps with one another. Yusuf's continued unwillingness to cooperate comes against the background of rumors that his clan was preparing to ease the famously stubborn President out if he did not cooperate with the Djibouti process. End summary.

Prime Minister Cautiously Optimistic

¶2. (C) In a November 11 meeting, TFG Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein "Nur Adde," accompanied by Somalia's Ambassador to Kenya Mohammed Ali Nur "Americo," described to the Ambassador his efforts to win TFG President Abdullahi Yusuf's agreement to a new interim cabinet since the issuance of a communique at the October 28 - 29 IGAD Extraordinary Summit on Somalia. (The Summit called for the creation of a cabinet within 14 days of the signing of the communique.) In two London meetings, November 7 and 8, Yusuf had rejected Nur Adde's list of cabinet members and someone, perhaps from Yusuf's entourage, had further insulted Nur Adde by circulating in Nairobi a list of cabinet members that differed from that proposed by the Prime Minister.

¶3. (C) Following Nur Adde's London meetings, pressure applied to Yusuf by influential members of the President's Majertein clan appeared to have caused Yusuf to temporarily soften his opposition to an interim cabinet. Amcit and co-clanner

Mohammed Abdirizak described to Special Envoy John Yates some of the pressure, alleging that there was a growing consensus that Yusuf should be eased out, and the names of potential successors were already circulating.

¶4. (C) At an impromptu November 12 press conference, the Prime Minister, in response to questions, guessed that Yusuf would approve his proposed cabinet, which he said he had composed in order to meet a deadline established by the October 29 IGAD Summit final communique, and to shore up the TFG in advance of negotiations with the ARS over the composition of a unity government. Nur Adde's decision to go public with his intentions apparently angered Yusuf. In a November 12 conversation, before his departure for Addis Ababa, the Prime Minister told us that Yusuf was refusing to discuss the interim cabinet with him.

Progress on the Ground Necessary

¶5. (C) In his meeting with the Ambassador, the Prime Minister identified two problems confronting the TFG: al-Shabaab's recent attacks against Amisom, and ENDF, and TFG troops in Mogadishu; and the need for the High-Level Committee and Joint Security Committee to operate on the ground in Somalia.

Nur Adde thought it was "still possible to isolate" al-Shabaab if the TFG - ARS unity government demonstrated some momentum. He was less certain that the committees would succeed in taking their joint efforts to Somalia. (In a separate conversation, TFG Co-Chairman of the High-Level Committee, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Abdisalam Aden, told us from Mogadishu November 12 that the ARS was not

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participating in on-going efforts to create a Benadir local administration because its security in Mogadishu could not be guaranteed.)

Dealing with Yusuf

¶6. (C) Nur Adde sidestepped a question from the Ambassador about rumors that Yusuf might be replaced, noting that Yusuf would have to stay, but that a way must be found to keep him cooperating with the Djibouti process. A change in the "facts on the ground" would induce both Yusuf and the GOE to cooperate, the Prime Minister thought. Ambassador "Americo" thought that a willingness by the ARS to travel to Mogadishu would be a necessary step. Nur Adde cautioned that ARS influence in Mogadishu was limited. It was not clear, he said, under what circumstances they would be able to travel to the capital.

Comment

¶7. (C) It appears that the President and Prime Minister may not be able to reach agreement even on a cabinet that would be in office only briefly before being replaced, in a best case scenario, by a TFG - ARS unity cabinet. Yusuf and Nur Adde continue to be at loggerheads, and it seems that the Prime Minister's decision to air his interactions with Yusuf before the press was designed to ensure that Yusuf would remain uncooperative, just at a point where, as he told the Ambassador, the President was beginning to show some flexibility.

RANNEBERGER